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PRINCIPLE AND CIRCUMSTANCES.

It is the distinguishing characteristic of man to appreciate moral truth, and to follow its dictates from an inward principle, which is not a mere casual impulse, or current opinion of the day, but the calm deduction of the highest reason, harmonising with the declared will of God, and acting through the medium of an enlightened conscience.

A high authority teaches us to combat circumstances, and promises high rewards to those who 'overcome.' It urges us to be pure amongst the impure—not to go out of the world, but to overcome the evil which is in it. Thus we are taught that 'life is a warfare, in which we must side with the good or evil; and just in proportion as we show indecision, we shall invariably suffer as moral beings.' This opposing of 'circumstances' by force of an inward principle, is the great moral warfare in which all good and true men have to bear a part, and the weapons of their warfare are not carnal, but spiritual; that is, they consist of 'principles.' What numerous things there are in every-day life which might yield a momentary gratification, but from the commission of which a man of principle is continually deterred! He might take some step which would make him suddenly rich, but he is deterred from doing so if it should cause injury or suffering to his fellow-creatures; he might invade the liberties and enjoyments of his fellow-men with impunity; in fact there is no limit to the mischief which every man might commit, if not under the restraint we have indicated. Virtuous conduct, therefore, is but the amount of resistance to circumstances, and the amount of sacrifice we may have submitted to for the sake of principle. We know, from experience, that there is no eminence of any kind without effort, resistance, discipline; and the excellence of the attainment is generally in proportion to the severity of the discipline. Exercise and effort tend to improve all our faculties, mental and moral, as well as physical. Providence seems to have interposed the obstacles of 'circumstances,' in order to strengthen character, and to develop virtue. Virtuous conduct, therefore, is not a mere conventionality or convenience of action. That is not virtue which is never tested by trial and temptation. Virtuous conduct cometh out of the furnace, and shines with increasing lustre. Everything that is lovely in character, every act of moral bravery and virtue, derives its lustre from this battling with circumstances, and overcoming them. The virtuous conduct which is the mere result of circumstances, is not virtue at all. It may wear its garb; it may receive even the homage of the world; but, as we understand virtue, this is not it. The opposite view of the subject, which would give to circumstances a greater influence over the virtues of men than principle, would

deadens all our faculties. We should be always calling on Jupiter for help, instead of putting our shoulder to the wheel, and vigorously trying what strength we have in ourselves. If circumstance is to mould us, and to limit our virtues, we have nothing to hope for, no moral or spiritual good to aspire after. We may, in that case, lie down in despair.

'Circumstance' is anything or nothing, according to the weakness or strength of character and principle to resist. It exists, at the best, only in some *tangible* shape, some physical obstruction, some caprice of fortune, or some bugbear of the mind. Virtue, conscience, duty!—the power of moral appreciation exists independently of all these. Though the whole world in arms is against the man of principle, he remains unmoved, self-controlled, and self-rewarded. You may imprison his body, or take away his life, but you cannot deprive him of his principles. When the body dies, he believes that these principles of truth and duty will still survive. If not, why this feeling after immortality? why this discrepancy between what we are, and what we would aspire to be? If circumstances make virtue, what becomes of virtue when circumstances vanish away? All sublunary things are merely 'circumstances,' and will one day vanish to us all; but virtue, and the rewards of virtuous conduct, emanating from a spirit and principle within, will still survive. As 'men's outward fortunes do draw the inward quality after them,' so it is natural to believe that, in a future state, this 'inward quality' will still 'draw after it' the superior blessings of immortality.

Even in the outward circumstances of life, why do we choose certain individuals for places of trust and responsibility, but because we think their principles are proof against the temptations of circumstances. It is the same with public men—the self-denying spirit which makes the patriot and martyr to principle, and to duty, this is their only passport to confidence and true fame, as it is the only passport to our confidence on behalf of the poorest man we may employ. The same applies to all moral reformers, and to every individual man: you will find that the virtue is the amount of resistance which they have shown to circumstance. We teach this lesson to our children, as the only solid basis of all moral training: 'when wicked men entice thee, consent thou not; when allured by the blandishments of transitory pleasure, look forward to futurity; when the days are dark, and the storms of trouble are threatening to overwhelm thee, still hold on to principle—be above 'circumstances!'

Even in temporal affairs, the advantages of being self-sustained by a fixed principle are most apparent. Men go into the wildernesses of the world surrounded with the most adverse circumstances; but the true man never desponds, so long as he has confidence in his prin-

ciples and in himself. He proceeds to do battle with them all: he fells the forests, he ploughs the fields, he sows his seeds, and in due time he reaps his reward.

This subject might be illustrated by the experience of every-day life. How notorious is the fact, that those children who have had the most done for them by circumstances, frequently turn out the least serviceable members of society! Pamper your offspring by circumstances, protect them and smother them with kindness, and you cannot take a more direct means of enfeebling their characters, and of robbing them of all genuine principle. On the other hand, who have always been the really influential and strong men of the day? Who are the men who have 'learned to endure hardness,' who can buffet most successfully against the frowns of fortune? Are they not generally those who are self-formed, who have done everything for themselves, who have had nothing to trust to but their own inward energies?

The same principle holds good in science, in literature, and in artistic eminence. It is not chartered universities, nor royal societies, nor the patronage of the great, which have produced the most splendid results. No: the fostering of circumstances *alone* never produced genius, nor virtue, nor eminence of any kind, and never will. It never produced a Watt or an Arkwright, a Stephenson or a Dalton. It never produced a poet like him

'Who walked in glory and in joy,
Following his plough upon the mountain side.'

The same may be said of religion, or rather of the fostering and patronising influence of religious professions.

If circumstances without effort produced virtue, then those countries should be the most virtuous which are the most favourably situated as to natural advantages. The orange-groves and vineyards of Spain and Italy, one would think, should be abodes of virtue and of patriotism, if easy circumstances, and the absence of obstacles, could produce it. But what is the fact? As Goldsmith says, 'Whilst—

In florid beauty groves and fields appear,
Man is the only growth that dwindles here.'

The high rewards of virtue, it would appear, are not offered to the merely acquiescent and passive spectator of the scene. The most amiable dispositions even degenerate when not called into active exertion. 'The strength to suffer, and the will to serve,' are not acquired by sitting down contentedly with things as we find them. It is not by living a butterfly or caterpillar existence, and merely taking the colour of surrounding circumstances, that eminence or virtue of any kind can be attained.

But besides all this, the advocates of the supremacy of 'circumstances' destroy every vestige of human responsibility! You must then passively submit to a worse than Asiatic apathy or Turkish fatalism. Duty is no more! You have merely to consult your convenience, your pride, your covetousness, or your lust; and these will find ready instruments of gratification in the circumstances around you. Every fiend that could minister to the evil passions of man would then be let loose, and the world would become one great pandemonium of villany and corruption. 'Man, so noble in reason, so infinite in faculties, in action so like an angel, and in apprehension so like a god,' is then, after all, the mere sport of circumstances! Why, this is the most degrading and injurious view of human nature you could possibly take. For what are these high faculties, these godlike instincts given to us, but that we may vindicate the supremacy of our moral being, and make the world and ourselves better by a continual warfare with circumstances. The man of principle has a talisman in his own breast which makes circumstance his slave. In mere worldly affairs, by the force of principle, we may, as Shakspeare says, 'pluck out of the

nettle danger, the flower safety.' 'We may extract a soul of good out of things' apparently 'evil.'

We would freely admit the enormous power of circumstances in moulding men's *manners*, and in reconciling them to the customs around them. No person who has observed the monotony, the sameness, and the commonplace character of the mass of mankind, but must be struck with the enormous influence of circumstances in producing these results. Even men's opinions may appear to be the result of circumstances; but these are merely the floating hearsay opinions of the day, and are of no use to their possessors, or to the world. It is 'because the world is too much with us, because we have given our hearts away,' that we are so miserably dependent on external opinions and circumstances. When we ascend to the regions of moral truth, to principles, we are altogether in a higher sphere—we no longer passively submit to be thought *for*, and moulded by others: we begin to think for ourselves; to appropriate principles as our own; and as individuals, and though alone, can confidently fall back upon them in the day of need. A man like this is self-guided, and he becomes strong; and prevails so long as the motto of his shield is to 'bide by the right.' There is no *right* and no *wrong* in human conduct, if you are the sport of 'circumstances;' no satisfactions of conscience for having stood by the right, no moral or spiritual progress for man, if he once embraces this degrading creed. No man can then be trusted in the common affairs of life: you give up the great principle of integrity between man and man: honour, faith, truth, and adherence to them, regardless of consequences, are then no more: you are then to wander forth into an unknown wilderness without a guide, and to sail on a trackless ocean without a compass, a rudder, or a chart, and with no haven of rest in prospect before you.

In these unbelieving times, it is difficult to make people perceive the mighty efforts which may spring from simple adherence to principle, even by a single individual. The world seems not to believe it, until some *one man* puts them all to the blush by adhering *to*, and suffering *for*, his principles. It is melancholy, in looking over the dreary waste of history, to find so few individuals, out of the vast mass, who have acted from principle such as we have attempted to describe. This may be truly described as 'the great tragedy of the world.' Still *there are a few*, and these few comprise the moral history and progress of mankind. By these the waverer is confirmed and called back to duty—the apathetic, and morally dead, are resuscitated to life and activity. It was one act of 'moral principle,' one act of resistance to circumstances, which made Joseph the saviour of his adopted country, and the deliverer of his people. There are a few kindred names in our modern history, and they are the turning-points of freedom, of reformation, and of religion. When the world stood aghast with fear, and was ready to give up the cause, these men of principle stepped into the breach, and turned the battle to the gate. Luther was made of materials like this; so were Ridley and Latimer, and a host of the early martyrs. By adhering to principle, Pym, and Hampden, and Cromwell wrested the sceptre from one of the proudest monarchies of the world, and saved their country from despotism; by adhering to principle, Greek and Roman sages, and patriots, and philosophers, have covered all future ages with traces of their classic glory. Even the deities in their pantheons are representatives of moral heroism, symbolising often in the rudest forms the triumphs of circumstance-defying principle. By principle, Washington saved his country from a foreign yoke, and founded that vast republic which is now the ark of refuge for the miseries and destitution of the world; by principle, Tell kindled in the mountains and valleys of Switzerland a love of freedom which will never die; by principle, more than by her armies and navies, our own beloved country remains to this

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day the arbiter of Europe, and amidst all her troubles and perplexities, still possesses the undiminished confidence of the world. It is by the high principle of *individuals*, exhibited under trying circumstances, that any nation ever became truly great; and it is by the want of it that so many have decayed away. In the language of Scripture, 'the time would fail to tell' of those deathless names who, through faith in principle, and in opposition to circumstances, 'have wrought righteousness, and waxed valiant in fight' in the moral warfare of the world. The time would fail also to tell of those still more interesting triumphs of principle which are every day exhibited in the quiet recesses of private life—the integrity of dependents, the mutual assistance of the poor, the kindness shown to the aged and infirm, the tenderness which hovers over the couch of sickness, and which seeks out the prisoner in his cell, the beneficence of neighbours, and the faithfulness of friends—these, bad as the world is, are sufficient to cast a halo of moral greatness over the destinies of man, which *circumstances* can neither give nor take away.

THE WEST INDIA VOYAGER.

Atlantic Ocean, Nov. 7, 18—. After three days' grave deliberation, I have resolved to keep a brief journal of a part of our voyage. The formation of this resolution was on this wise. On Thursday morning, my fellow-voyager loudly declaimed against some of our passengers for speaking of that day as sacred to the memory of Guy Faux—a gross error (as he deemed it) in chronology. Now, Guy Faux's day it was, and it appeared to me plain that, unless we kept our reckoning better, we should lose a couple of days at least before reaching Jamaica. So I keep a journal to save time, and to spend it.

More than this, sea thoughts and sea sensations are to a landsman so various, that unless you describe them as they come, you lose them. No great loss perhaps; and yet there are some I have been conscious of during the last few days, the recollection of which I much wish, if only for the sake of contrast, to retain. Hence this my chronicle.

If I were an old Roman, and marked favourite days in my pocket-book with white chalk, Tuesday, Wednesday, and, I must add, Thursday of this week, would be marked with B. B. crayons, if such there are; if not, with coal black. Three mortal days, to say nothing of nights, we rolled, and creaked, and pitched, struggling with wind and waves without and within—but the tragedy is too recent to become the subject of dramatic description. The simple fact is, we had all the time a 'nasty cross sea,' with a head wind and a rolling vessel, and we adapted ourselves to our circumstances.

Two things in those three days are note-worthy. We discussed, with illustrations, the question, What is the disease of sea sickness—is it physical or mental? I thought it an affection of the brain, and argued pathetically enough—an idea confirmed by an ancient theory—that a man's thinking faculty is in his stomach. Beyond the weight of this coincidence, however, I am not inclined to attach much importance to this explanation.

The other note-worthy event remains. I had proof of the incorrectness of Bonaparte's celebrated dictum—'that there is but one step between the sublime and the ridiculous,' a dictum which, I am aware, that some speeches of his illustrate. Here the sublime was on deck, in the raging sea and roaring wind; and the ridiculous below, in the countenances and groans of our passengers. Between them, we found not one step, but thirty! The great sayings of the greatest men are evidently not meant to be pushed too far.

Having started on Monday, on Thursday evening we rallied a little; on Friday, breakfasted on beefsteaks at one o'clock; and to-day we have had three regular meals—in the cabin—among a hundred and twenty fellow-travellers, and without a qualm. The weather is

already balmy and summer-like; the sea, an invisible green, nearly black; the wind fair; the company agreeable; and Madeira within three days' sail. Yes, three days' sail, for our progress is slow, and it will take eight days from Southampton to reach Madeira. 'But never mind,' says our steward; 'she took twelve days last voyage.' 'Rolling, sir?' 'Why, pretty well, but nothing to what I have known. The fact is, our steamer had last voyage a gale the whole way.'

Was ever seen such a ship's company? Our crew are in all about eighty persons. Our passengers 120—Germans, Spaniards, Frenchmen, omnipresent Scotchmen and English, besides Americans and West Indians. You will remember among our passengers the Dutch family. Their fore-elders certainly sat to Teniers: grandmother, mother, children, father, and all. There is also a laughing Spanish face (with body to match of course) whom Murillo might have painted. I speak of her with less confidence, however. Spanish archness is so imitable, and so likely to be imitated, that one can never be sure that it is genuine. The Dutch face and the Dutch figure are both safe from counterfeits. No one can copy them if they will, and nobody will copy them if they can. Might not this hint be sold to Messrs Freshfield? Only make bank-notes like Dutch young ladies, and who would forge them? The Dutch children come upon deck every day: they find few friends, however. Their faces are pleasing, and when lighted up with a smile, are even pretty; but their dress is sadly against them. One little fellow was before me to-day, with a large slit from his neck to his legs—in front and behind too. I did not dare to touch him, though strongly disposed. I should have expected to have seen him drop out of his covering, and so leave us both in an awkward plight: I with his clothes, *minus* the boy; and near me the boy, *minus* the clothes. On second thoughts, and after further examination, I fancy this dress is adopted for economy's sake. The little fellow has his trousers on, but no coat; or rather he wears as coat a wrapping of tropical air, a material confessedly light and inexpensive. Tell this hint to any six-boyed mothers you know. It may be worth something.

I wish I could give you an idea of one of our dinners: only one indeed have I attended; but before familiarity breeds contempt, I will chronicle it, though but briefly. Fancy, then, one hundred and twenty passengers, of all hues, shapes, beards, and head-dresses, airing themselves, and seeking appetites, and shunning nausea from ten o'clock till three. At four they rush below, take their seats to the sound of trumpet, and fill the cabin. First comes soup, then fish, then roast, boiled, grilled-fried flesh, fowl, and game of all sorts, some richly odorous, all obviously welcome. You look at your watch: it is five o'clock; for this is the business of the day. Then comes pastry; then cheese and celery; then dessert, and such wine as you please to order. By this time it is past six, and the dinner is done. Done? No—hardly: it is followed by cigars and walks on deck till eight o'clock, when eight bells ring, and summon us to tea. Our morning meal is at nine, and is equally hearty—chops, steaks, eggs, and fowl, with tea and coffee. The whole one hundred and twenty at once: for all defaulters show themselves now, and seem proud of their strength.

It is impossible to conceive a better half-way house to the tropics than Madeira. We arrived here early this morning, and have most of us been on shore for a few hours, admiring flowers, and fruits, and hanging-gardens on all sides—everything, in fact, of nature's workmanship, though but little of man's. Our vessel was surrounded, as soon as we dropped anchor, by Portuguese traders, who offered flowers, baskets, oranges, and tropical fruits in rich abundance. The noise and gestures of the salesmen would have bespoken in Ireland bloodshed at least; here they bespeak only the activity of the commercial spirit. After a ramble through the streets of the town—the thermometer at 75

degrees in the shade, and during the early morning—we mounted our horses, and ascended the steep on which the town stands. The gardens abound with orange-trees, savannas, figs, and vines, and are often bordered with hedges of bamboo. The geranium and heliotrope, and double-white jasmine and the rose-tree (literally a tree), are still in full bloom, and hung over the roads and streets in luxuriant festoons. In our peregrinations we visited the cathedral, a gaudily-ornamented building. We afterwards went to the nunnery, where we were tempted to buy artificial flowers curiously beautiful, being made entirely of feathers. The sisters also showed us a collection of preserved fruits—pumpkins, figs, lemons, &c. Some of us yielded to the temptation, and brought off a pound of each, intending to bring part to England. C—fears our report will be—'It would not keep.'

We sail this afternoon for Barbadoes.

Nov. 14.—A sea voyage is, after all, a monotonous business. Our one hundred and twelve passengers—for we left eight at Madeira—breakfast, lunch, dine, and take tea as usual. The only novelties are dancing in the evening on deck, and most determined card-playing below. Our weather is glorious, very much like an English summer, and as yet not warmer. We must not boast, however, for we are still some distance from the tropical line: we expect to pass it to-morrow. The chief peculiarities in external objects are the sky and stars, the flying fish, and the phosphorescent appearances on the water. The stars shine out in much stronger relief than in England: at home they are too like candle ends, set in wet blankets; here they seem literally 'eye-holes to let glory through.' The position of the constellations, too, is entirely changed: earth there is none: but we are often tempted to believe that we are under a 'new heavens.' The flying fish have shown themselves repeatedly during the last few days: they are of the size of a herring, and fly along the surface of the water for a very considerable distance. Dolphins and sharks we have no hope of seeing: the noise of our paddles frightens them away.

Nov. 16.—Contrary to the usual practice on board steamers, we are to have a visit to-morrow from Neptune. He came on deck to-night, and announced to the captain his intention to visit us to-morrow. I saw Neptune—I ought to have said his messenger. He brought recent newspapers and despatches from his sea majesty—the despatches signed 'Neptune,' and witnessed by 'Amphitrite x her mark.' I must send an account to one of the youngsters.

We have been sadly baffled by the trade winds. They wafted us along for a day or two, and then left us. Their place is now supplied by a head wind. The only serious effect, however, is, that we shall have at Barbadoes but six hours instead of twenty-four. 'Never mind,' says our Admiralty agent, 'it's a filthy, broiling place.' Decisive indeed!

Carlisle Bay, Barbadoes, Nov. 24.—There are few things more amusing to one who visits the tropics for the first time than the heat—amusing, for heat is really a friend to good temper; more so, at all events, than cold. You wake in the morning before sunrise. You begin to wash, and by the time you have dried your face and hands, they need drying again! You put on your stockings, and though they be (as they ought to be) quite clean, you are obliged to have recourse to the towel again, or fall back on your pillow exhausted—and so on, till, at the end of an hour, your toil and toils are ended. Then the heat of walking on deck begins. You sit under the awning, stretch out your neck to catch the breeze, and absolutely perspire with the effort. Your walking down, such as it is, you descend to breakfast—chops, rice, beefsteaks, eggs, tea. All eat and perspire, and perspire and eat again: the only interruption, 'Oblige me with that chop!' 'How warm it is!' and such-like interesting communications. The walking on deck is resumed; and all is done to remind you that it is not winter. The sailors

are at their work, clothed in at most three garments, including a hat, and all scanty. The Dutch children—who turn out to be little Spaniards—have but one garment to cover them, Fernandian fashion. Our captain and many of our passengers are all in white, from head to heel (their very boots are white); and ladies and gentlemen all huddle together on the shady side of the deck, creating artificial gales enough to waft the ship out of her course did they all blow in one direction, instead of blowing in the fair faces (so called by courtesy) of the sufferers. On shore, the sailors' garments are not quite so complete; the children's dress is somewhat shorter; and ladies and gentlemen—not indeed of the highest class—dress (as to their arms, necks, and legs) in white or black, according to the countries where their parents were born. The heat of the tropics is really amusing!

We have to-day spent our first day on shore in the tropics—a very agreeable one indeed. Last night we saw land the first time for nearly a fortnight, and at eight o'clock dropt our anchor in Carlisle Bay, off Bridgetown, the capital of Barbadoes. How joyous is the sound of the chain-cable rattling out of the port-hole, as the anchor is seeking the bottom! It is really poetical, conveying to the mind, and to the heart too, the same ideas as 'home.' After breakfast this morning, some friends came on board for us, and invited us to their house. On reaching the shore, we all went to bathe, and after a quarter of an hour's drive, we found a bathing-house, built on piles in the sea, and protected from the sharks by a long coral reef, about a quarter of a mile from the land. Here we had a kind of tepid bath, which we greatly enjoyed. We afterwards dined on turkey, mutton, yams, sweet potato and rice, and sorrel puddings. . . . I ought to have said that before bathing we went to the market, and ate a couple of most delicious oranges and a piece of sugarcane. After bathing, we had a short drive into the country among 'Barbadoes' pride,' tulip-trees, cocoa-nut-trees, plantains, papaws, negro huts, guinea-grass, sugar-cane, and naked black children, the whole very becoming and picturesque. The children here are real ornaments to the landscape, with their white teeth and occasional white shirts, their strong limbs and laughing faces. They are more precocious than with us; often walking at nine months, and looking quite observant and judicial at fifteen. The children painted by Spanish and Italian painters are quite natural, though so sedate and thoughtful. The laughing Saxon face contradicts this statement, but not so the southern and Indian.

The island of Barbadoes is for all the world like the Isle of Wight, and of the same size; most richly cultivated, but appearing somewhat bare and flat. It was a natural and pleasant fancy, as we neared the island, to imagine that we were sailing towards Cowes, having passed the Needles a couple of hours before. The cocoa-nut-trees and plantains, and the aforesaid amusing heat, soon dissipated this delusion, and said plainly enough—'Cowes! 'tis four thousand miles away!'

Bridgetown stretches along the sea-side, in a beautiful bay, for about two miles, and contains a population of some twenty thousand.

The blacks who own the boats that took us on shore are a sad set, but good-tempered and amusing. The first sound I heard from them in the morning was 'Poor Lucy Neal!' whistled in quite touching style. One fellow had called his boat 'John Weslen,' meaning John the Wesleyan; and cried out, 'John Weslen waits for you, ladies and gentlemen!' Another had called his 'The Friends'; and his cry was, 'The Friends, at your service: have the honour to take you on shore, sir?' The whole band showing their teeth and looking inordinately waggish. 'What's your charge?' 'A dollar a-piece, sir'—it being notorious that a shilling had been the price all the morning—'No, no; we'll give a shilling for each of us.' 'Yes, sir, that will do.' Then sotto-voce, 'Make way there; the gentlemen are coming.'

Port of Spain, Nov. 28.—After a few hours' stay at

Grenada—one of the most beautiful harbours one can imagine—and a pleasant night sail, we reached Port of Spain about eleven o'clock on Thursday morning. The passage through the Bocas (between the Spanish main and Trinidad) is very fine, and the appearance of the hills, covered with tropical trees and vegetation to the very top, striking and grand. It often reminded me of the quieter order of Swiss scenery, and especially of the Lake of Lucerne, *minus* the Alps. Of course it is more luxuriant, and much less sublime. Seen on shore, however, the country is incomparably superior in beauty and richness to Switzerland. No language can give any adequate idea of it. The profuseness, the beauty, is absolutely extravagant. The streets of Port of Spain are all at right angles, and all end in bush or luxuriant savannas. In nearly every street you find the palm, the cocoa-nut, the bread-fruit, the plantain, and the orange or lemon-tree. In all, too, are beautiful flowering shrubs and plants. The very weeds of the street attract your eye, and prompt you to ask their name and quality. Viewed from the hills, the town has a very fine appearance, and you hardly know whether to call it a wood with residences interspersed, or a town in trees.

Yesterday I visited various country districts; and this morning—the thermometer at 90 degrees—we took a ride up one of the hills near the town. I shall never forget the impression of profusion which I received. The road passed, after leaving the end of the street, through a most graceful avenue of bamboo, each plant of great height and elegant form, the whole gradually closing at the top, a Gothic arch of nature's own making. We then caught a view of the town, the Gulf of Paria, gemmed with numerous islands, and the vast hills of the Spanish main on one side, and the steep wooded hills and dells of Trinidad on the other. As we went on, our road became narrower, till about half a mile from the town, we reached the bush or woods. And what are they like? The very question I have been asking myself ever since I saw them. They are all round me at this moment, now bathed in light, 'dark through excessive brightness,' and now thrown into shade by some passing cloud; and yet I cannot liken them to anything in heaven or earth, or describe them in any terms more likely to give an idea of them, than if I were to describe one of Claude's paintings as made up of sea, marble columns, masts, glimmers of light, and a rich setting sun. Look at that stybiscus, with large scarlet flowers and leaf of dark green; and at that creeper that covers it, with most gigantic leaves, and flower of most delicate yellow; and again at that wild-pea, the colour of our flax-plant, but brighter, and with small leaves shaped like those of the acacia. Beneath the whole is the wild aloe: and behind and above, forming a fitting background, a group of trees of nearly every colour and shape; the feathery palm, with its clean graceful stem; the silk-cotton, with its light-coloured naked branches; the light-green plantain, and the bay-leaf-coloured orange; the whole covered with the bell-rope creeper, so strong and close, as to form an impenetrable wall of vegetation. He must be a very wayward, courageous donkey that can wander far in these thickets! He need not indeed wander at all; for without leaving the road (a narrow bridle path), he can feast on plants and leaves so rich and delicate, as to cast into the shade that most welcome of dainties—the flower and tender sprouts of the Scotch thistle.

Such objects as these scattered over hill and valley, diversified every here and there with small savannas and cane pieces, negro huts and naked children, are the *matériel* of our landscape. But, as above, 'sea, columns, masts, light, and sunset,' is but a poor description of Claude; nor is mine a better description of the scenery of the tropics.

The governor, a very intelligent and liberal man, has ascertained that one in twenty-three of the population attend schools. Estimating the population at 60,000 (the last census), the number of scholars at all the

schools is about 2600. The great body of the people are unable to read, and are lamentably ignorant. The island might supply all Europe with sugar: it produces but 25,000 hogsheds, a quantity which may be raised under circumstances less favourable than those of Trinidad by 5000 labourers.

The great misfortune of this island, as well as of all other islands in the West Indies, is, that the proprietary is over head and ears in debt, and are therefore unable to work their estates with advantage. Nearly all the sugar estates are mortgaged. The mortgagee receives six, eight, ten, or twelve per cent. All the sugar is sent home—not sold on the spot for money—to the mortgagee in his ships, and sold by him on commission, the proceeds being invested, also on commission, in whatever is wanted for the estate. The mortgagee often receives for interest and commission one-fourth of the whole produce; labour and plants nearly all the rest. Estates which are free from mortgage, and are in the hands of owners, everywhere answer well.

The labourer generally receives four bits a day (1s. 8d.), and lives rent-free. Each, too, has a garden as large as he can cultivate. This mixture of wages and rent is a vicious system, and the evils of it are aggravated by the continuance of practices which in slavery were bad enough, but which ought not to be allowed among free men.

Trinidad, December.—One of the 'lions' of the West Indies is a negro quarrel. They never fight or strike, but scream and gabber, and shout like None, however, but themselves, can be their parallel! I never heard such laughter, nor saw such gesticulations! Two ladies were quarrelling to-day near our vessel. Their eyes shot fire; their nostrils were distended; every muscle and ribbon took part in the fray; and at length the bolder of the two (both being as black and as glossy as jet), having reserved her heaviest shot for the last, paused a moment, retired a few steps, and said—'You he! you he!' Then with the emphasis of a cannon ball—'Who are *you*, you African nigger!' and walked away. Half an hour after, the defeated combatant was pacing the quay, 'discouraging most eloquent music'—to the air. The storm had not yet subsided; and though no one was within hearing, and she was perfectly sober, she was still spending her strength in abuse. I have frequently come in for the tail of such a storm, and supposed that the declaimant was drunk or lunatic, but now find that this is their favourite mode of obtaining relief.

Out of the towns, the roads in Trinidad are made of the natural soil, which is rich, very deep and loamy, and entirely free from stones. The rainy season, which usually begins in June, did not begin this year till July, and has not yet ended. The rain of five months is now, therefore, on the roads, which are entirely undrained, and often not wider than an ordinary footpath. When they are wider, they resemble nothing so much as an Irish bog. Deeming it important to visit various parts of the island, we started on Monday in the steamer for San Fernando, some twenty miles down the coast. There we were joined by another friend; and after hiring horses, started about two o'clock for a station about twelve miles in the interior. Our way lay through brush and sugar-pieces. In the former, the road was covered in on all sides with bell-rope creepers, plantains, and other trees, and was but wide enough for one horse at a time; in the latter, horse and rider were overtopped by the luxuriant sugar-cane, which was seen, when you reached a little rising ground, to cover the whole view. The rain fell heavily, and our horses sunk at nearly every step up to their knees, and often up to the girth. By the time we reached our destination we were completely muddled through. There we found one room, one hammock, one chair, one cup, one knife and fork—no two—the whole on the top of a hill, on a spot which had been recently cleared; while all round it, and within a few yards, was dense forest. Unhappily, our servant, one of the poor outcasts from

Madeira, was ill of fever, so that we had to wait upon ourselves. We first changed our clothes, had a thorough ablution, and a vigorous dry-rubbing; then lighted our wood fire, and had a cup of coffee, with a little sweet cassada-root, the only bread of that district; gave the poor Portuguese some medicine, and composed ourselves to sleep—I in the sole hammock: my companions on the cedar floor. By sunrise we rose—two of us thankful, like Wesley, when in Cornwall, that the skin of one side was left; and all thankful that we were none the worse for our ride. The morning was wet, and the rain came down in true tropical style. We started, however, for another station, distant about twelve miles. The roads were even worse than on the previous day. We had a long ride through brush and cane-pieces, and by seven o'clock, reached the hut of a friend, a black man, who is employed as a teacher. He has also built a neat wooden chapel and schoolhouse: the whole is of cedar, and would have cost us more than £100. We again changed; and after giving our horses a good feed of Indian corn, and ourselves taking a supper of rice and salt fish, retired to our hammocks (of Indian manufacture), and slept as soundly as the pattering rain would allow. The next morning we had a long chat on business; and about one o'clock, two of us started for San Fernando, distant some fifteen miles. Mr C—— strongly dissuaded us from proceeding, and urged us to return with him to his residence, and thence to San Fernando. But our dry clothes were all used up, and we could not well get them dried again: my companion began to feel chilly and feverish; nor was there any prospect of the weather improving: we had seen all we came to see, and did not feel it right to continue exposing ourselves to the effects of quietness and inaction. We therefore started alone; and after three hours' hard riding up hill and down hill, through rivers and bogs, reached San Fernando by four o'clock: the only accident was, that my companion's horse fell with him, and threw him into the mud literally over head and ears. He was previously 'muddled through,' so that the accident was not serious. At San Fernando we obtained a third change, a dinner, and a passage by the steamer, reaching Port of Spain about half-past ten. Such roads for mud and vegetation I never conceived of; and such is their state for four or five months in every twelve! For conveying sugar and other produce they are wanted only in the dry season, when all is dried, and the soil is burnt nearly to the hardness of brick. The only travellers who use them now are Europeans and others who ride, and the labourers who travel, without encumbrance. All provisions, except yams, sweet potatoes, cassada, Indian corn, and the common fruits, are brought upon the heads of carriers from San Fernando.

During the ride I made the acquaintance of several large lizards, and a couple of scorpions, one of which Mr C—— had caught in the roof of his little hut a few weeks before. It was also my first introduction to large sugar estates, swampy bush, missionary tours in their worst form, Indian houses (of bamboo), Trinidad mud and roads. We are, however, and in spite of all, none the worse. This I ascribe to the free use, internally and externally, of cold water.

As the evening draws on in this island, there are some of the oddest sounds and sights imaginable. They are introduced by the buzzing of an insect, which reminds you of the hum of a room of spinning-jennies. By and by a shrill strong whistle startles you. It might be the railway train leaving Southampton: but no; it is only the rain beetle. Now you hear the frogs; one set howl and snap, like the baying of a pack of fox-hounds a mile or two off; and that cry, so like that of a drowning man, the water gurgling in his throat, is from this gentleman here, whose mouth you see just above the water. He will continue his pleasant melody till the morning; and if the mosquito wake you—or worse still, the prickly heat, a burning, prickling, itching sensation, which attacks your feet and arms—you

can exercise your benevolence in throwing imaginary ropes to imaginary drowning men. In Port of Spain you can hear them all night. These lights flitting up and down—now here, now there—and which lead you to believe that the whole insect world has a ball to-night, and that these are the servants carrying lights for their mistresses, are the fire-flies. The cane-piece and the wood are quite lighted up by them. At Savanna, they startled me into the fear that the roof of our hut was in flames. The humming-birds of the island are known all the world over—very gay and beautiful they are.

Grenada, December.—Friday and Saturday we spent in visiting the governor, the chief-justice, and others. Early in the week we went on board our steamer, and had a glorious parting view of the hills and city of Port of Spain. All the hills throughout the island are in bush, as is most of the land. Out of 1,000,000 acres, only 25,000 are under cultivation; and these yield £400,000 worth of produce!

We reached Grenada this morning (Monday), and here we stay till Thursday. Not a book-shop in the place! The steamer taking in coals, and the stewards scrubbing the decks. The weather is most unusually wet, so that I am confined on board, and almost entirely below. The sun burns intensely one moment, and the next the sky is overcast, and the rain comes down wholesale (till everything floats) in torrents. Now you see a rainbow on the sea and in the sky, and the shower is gone—to be followed with quite Irish profusion by another, and yet another still. They make the air quite oppressive. Happily, as this letter starts for England, I also go on to Jamaica.

THE BAD FIVE-SHILLING PIECE.

In the farthest house, in a dark, damp, and dreary court of St Giles's in London, two black-looking men and a poor emaciated woman were busy over a charcoal fire, in the back room of the third floor of that rotten and dingy tenement. Moulds and implements of coining lay on the floor and on an old table; and the strong smell of bad gin, from a broken-necked and uncorked bottle, diffused itself around the room. The presence of poverty, vice, crime, and misery characterised the tenement and its tenants. In this place, and under these agencies, our bad five-shilling piece was smelted, and moulded, and stamped into its sorry existence. How it was put into circulation among the sterling current coin of the realm we shall not stop to inquire. From pickpockets to their victims, from them to the shopkeepers, it somehow passed on, until at length it came into the hands of Mrs Hoardings of the Commercial Road.

Mrs Hoardings of the Commercial Road was the wife of a tradesman well to do in the general grocery line. Together they had papered up no little amount of cash, on which to retire one day to suburban quietness. They had indeed well picked their plums. Those two or three neat new little cottages in Limehouse-Fields were old Hoardings's. Cayenne pepper is not stronger than that fact. Then there were several gas shares: tallow candles had opened the way for gas lights: tea, too, was the first letter in tenements: young Hyson, the dashing young Chinese man, had helped his old English friend: full-flavoured Mocha also had often filled his cup. Moreover, his butter had ever worn a rich golden hue, and he had fortunately never buttered his fingers. His starch and his money-till were therefore not far apart. Whether the Hoardingses would ever retire, however, was a matter of considerable doubt to their acquaintances. They had already talked of it for at least the last twelve years. It was true they had no family, but still love of gold was a growing child. Retire, indeed!—not they.

How it ever should have happened that Mrs Hoardings should have taken a bad five-shilling piece was far beyond her own comprehension. She could scarcely

conceive it possible. Who could have passed it to her? It was certain, however, that she herself had taken it, as her husband had been out during the day on the evening of which she had discovered it in the till. She was not suspicious, but she had some slight misgivings as to a thin lad with a ragged yellow article loosely tied round his neck. He had come in for a pound of candles—fourteens. She had never seen him before, and perhaps never should again. However, she would keep the matter snug—her husband should not know she had been such a stupid. Stand the loss she would not: somebody must be the loser, but that was no reason why she should. Such was the philosophy of the Commercial Road.

It was on a Saturday evening, at a late hour, that the shop was still full of customers. Mrs Hoardings, with her sleeves tucked high up the arm, was up to her eyes in business, and also up to something else. 'Half-a-pound of twelves,' threepence; 'bacon,' fipence; 'pepper,' ha'penny; 'pound of moist,' fourpence; 'half-a-pound of butter, salt,' sixpence; 'ounce and half of tea,' fourpence—ha'penny; 'threepence—eightpence—ha'penny—one and a ha'penny—one and six and a ha'penny—one and elevenpence, ma'am.' Just as this was settling, in came Bill Simmons the omnibus conductor, puffing and blowing, and not a little intoxicated. 'Ounce of best shag, and change for this here,' said Bill, ringing a half-sovereign on the counter. 'As quick as you please, missis, for I am in a hurry,' he added. Mrs Hoardings was very quick. The tobacco was soon weighed and placed in Bill's black bone box, and the change given from her pocket—a five-shilling piece, and some odd silver and coppers. With this Bill was off. Need we say what five-shilling piece went with him?

In the depths of her mind, Mrs Hoardings had before determined that somebody must be the loser by that bad five-shilling piece, but that that was no reason why she should be so. Noble determination!—generous resolution!—honest philosophy of the Commercial Road! Was Bill Simmons, the poor 'busman, then to be the loser, and that, too, when omnibus fares were being reduced on all sides, and omnibus servants having their wages in consequence curtailed? Just so—this was the practical point in Mrs Hoardings's Commercial Road ethics. Somebody must be the loser—not she. Why then not Bill Simmons as well any one else? Why then not Bill Simmons more than any one else? Bill Simmons was a stranger to Mrs Hoardings: Mrs Hoardings was a stranger to Bill Simmons. All the better this. Bill Simmons drove a Clapton omnibus. He only happened to be out in the Commercial Road that night on what he called a jolly spree. Mrs Hoardings, it is true, never knew all this. She knew that he was a stranger to the shop, and speculated accordingly. As it was, her speculation succeeded. Bill Simmons took no note of the shop or the money. Mrs Hoardings was safe. What mattered it that Bill Simmons was poor; somebody must lose—not she. It was true the Hoardingses had gas shares, and those neat new little cottages in Limehouse-Fields. It was true that they thought of retiring, and that the loss of five shillings would not have been much. Was it honest?—that thought never occurred to Mrs Hoardings—never entered into the ethics of the Commercial Road. Somebody must lose—not she. With his bad luck, poor Bill Simmons! With all her savings, still poorer Mrs Hoardings! Fortunate was it for the former that he had closed up his day's account with the clerk of the company before taking her bad five-shilling piece.

It was Sunday evening. Bill was about starting with his omnibus from Clapton on its return to town. Eleven insides and three outs had already taken their places. Up came a gentleman and lady out of breath, for it was past ten o'clock, and they were afraid of losing the ride.

'Town, sir?' said Bill.

'Room inside?' said the gentleman.

'Just room for two,' was the answer; and the poet and his wife—for such they were—took their seats in the vehicle. The omnibus rattled off along the Clapton Road, through Hackney, past the Eastern Counties Railway terminus, to the Flower-Pot in Bishopsgate Street, where it stopped. Out went a white-headed old gentleman very carefully. Out rolled a fat lady, equal to any two other fares in size and weight. Out popped a dapper young clerk, paid his fare, and was off with a twirl of his cane. Out came the poet and his wife, the former fumbling in his trousers pocket.

'Ellen, my dear,' said the poet, 'I thought I had change. Did I give it you?'

'No,' answered the wife; 'you put it in your pocket.' 'It is not here now, then,' said he, 'It was six or seven shillings, and I recollect I put it in loosely.'

'Feel in the other pockets, my dear,' said the wife. The poet did so. Meanwhile the other passengers had paid their fares, and Bill Simmons stood waiting for his. In vain the pockets were each examined. There was the poet's purse, but no loose silver was there.

'Turn the one out, sir, where you thought it was!' exclaimed Bill. The poet did so. There was a hole in it; the purse had remained safe, but the loose silver had worked its way out.

'Thank God,' said the poet, 'there is no thief in the matter; that sin is in no one's heart.'

'Let's look in the 'bus,' said Bill. A lantern was procured, and a search made among the straw; but no money was found. The loss must have taken place at Clapton, when they were hastening after the omnibus.

'It cannot be helped,' said the poet, taking out his purse; 'you must give me change.'

The purse was a green silk one, on which was a three-stringed lyre, worked in gilded beads by the poet's wife. It contained one sovereign. The poet handed it to Bill Simmons, and received the change, among which was the bad five-shilling piece, which had rested undisturbed in Bill's pocket since it had passed from the honourable hands of Mrs Hoardings. Bill was innocent, but he had not been tempted.

The poet and his wife wended their way to their lodgings. 'It is a sad loss seven shillings,' said the poet sorrowfully.

'Never mind,' said the wife, struggling to keep up her spirits, 'the "Sixpenny Magazine" owes five pounds.'

'When will it pay it?' said the poet despairingly.

Thus hoping and fearing, they walked on, until they reached the Commercial Road. They stopped at the house where they lodged. What name is that over the shop front?—surely it is HOARDINGS! Yes, the poet lodged in the first floor of Mrs Hoardings—the identical Mrs Hoardings. How strange!—the bad five-shilling piece, which had gone out on Saturday night, had come back on Sunday night to the same house.

On rising the next morning after a restless night, the poet's wife reminded her husband that that day their week's rent was due. He had not forgotten it.

'What shall we do, love?' said she.

'Pay, by all means,' answered he. 'I have not forgotten the woman's insolence when we owed her a week before.'

Poor poet!—on his purse, indeed, was worked a lyre with golden strings, but the sovereign he had changed the preceding night was the only one that he possessed. Thus, then, arose the immediate consideration of ways and means. By contributions to the magazines, and articles for the newspapers, he seldom made more than thirty shillings per week, and sometimes not twenty. Then the editors were not always punctual in their payments; and some of his literary debtors sinned more than by want of punctuality. At the present crisis he had just nineteen shillings in hand. Of this, twelve shillings were owing Mrs Hoardings as rent for her two furnished first-floor rooms, and five-and-sixpence for sundry items procured at her shop during the past week, which, when paid, would reduce their capital to exactly eighteenpence. However, the poor, proud poet

determined to pay it, and to trust to his week's exertions, and the recovery of his back debts, for the necessary supplies.

Accordingly, as usual, Mrs Hoordlings was called up. She came, looking most graciously. A bland smirk displayed her yellow teeth.

'We would pay our rent, Mrs Hoordlings,' said the poet's wife.

'Thank ye, ma'am,' replied that excellent dame.

The purse with the lyre of gilded strings was produced; the money was counted out—a five-shilling piece, two half-crowns, and seven-and-sixpence in small change. Mrs Hoordlings re-counted it hesitatingly.

'It is right, I believe?' said the poet's wife.

'Seventeen-and-sixpence certainly; but then this five-shilling,' said Mrs Hoordlings, inspecting that coin rather curiously, which, whether known or unknown, was an old acquaintance.

'What do you mean, Mrs Hoordlings?' said the poet, rising from his seat, and approaching the table.

'That this here five-shilling is a bad un'—that's all,' said Mrs Hoordlings, bridling up. 'In coorse,' added she, 'I do not say as how you knowed it.'

'A bad one!' repeated the poet, turning red—a sign much more frequently of nervousness than of guilt. 'Let me see it, Mrs Hoordlings!' He felt the five-shilling piece—it felt soft and greasy; he tried it upon the table—it emitted a dead leaden sound; he examined its rim—it was irregular. 'You are right, Mrs Hoordlings,' said he, his face changing to white; 'it is a bad one. I took it from an omnibus man last night.'

'Oh the rascal!' exclaimed Mrs Hoordlings, almost bursting with righteous indignation.

'Who would have thought he would have cheated us under such circumstances?' murmured the poet's wife.

'Let us not judge, my dear,' said the poet, turning to his wife; 'perhaps the man was no more aware of its being a bad coin than ourselves. Mrs Hoordlings,' he continued, looking rather sheepishly at that lady, 'I am very sorry; but as this has occurred, I have not the means to settle your bill. We had the misfortune to lose some cash last night, in running after the omnibus whose conductor passed us this bad five-shilling piece. You can take enough for the rent, and we will settle the bill for the articles furnished when we pay next week.'

Mrs Hoordlings hesitated a moment, and then replied, 'What must be, must, I suppose. Haven't got, can't pay anyhow. But it's best as I speak to the master; and with these words, and a most mysterious air, she departed with the good twelve-and-sixpence, leaving the bad five-shilling piece on the table.

An age of suspense was crowded in a minute for the poet and his wife. Presently in bounced Mrs Hoordlings again, without the usual ceremony of rapping at the door.

'Master says that he can't understand trusting!' she exclaimed. 'Our business has always been a ready-money one. Howsuever, as you are here, we'll try another week; but as we can't afford losing, master says as how you'll please to take a week's warning to leave. Litterary people is so unsartin, as you knows as well as we,' concluded Mrs Hoordlings in a justificatory tone.

'Very well, Mrs Hoordlings,' replied the poet. 'I understand what you mean, and take your notice; but I have no doubt of being able to pay you next week.'

'Hope so, sir,' said Mrs Hoordlings retiring.

'Oh the poor poet! Oh the poorer Mrs Hoordlings! Gas shares! Neat new little cottages at Limehouse-Fields! Bad five-shilling piece!

A sad week was it to the poet. He wrote to the editors who owed him money; he called at their offices: it was in vain. Some were out of town; others, more honestly, declared that they would only settle at their own convenience, and those contributors who were dissatisfied, might suit themselves elsewhere. A sad week also was it for the poet's wife. She was a comfortable little

body, and liked to prepare tit-bits to surprise her husband. They fed badly that week, however; although, unknown to the poet, she had pawned her earrings to furnish a rump-steak for the Sunday dinner. Meanwhile the bad five-shilling piece had rested untouched on the mantelpiece. There it lay, the unconscious instrument which had accelerated, if not produced, the present misfortune of the poet. On the Sunday evening the poet noticed it; and saying, 'Poor thing! thou shalt do no one more injury,' threw it into the fire. It was soon a formless lump of lead.

The morning of pay-day arrived. A sad seriousness sat on the faces of both the poet and his wife. He had determined to pay, and to leave. He had given up all hopes of receiving any money to meet the emergency; and he therefore took the watch his father had left him to the pawnbroker's, and returned with the sum advanced upon it, which was more than was requisite to pay Mrs Hoordlings's claims. She accordingly was summoned up, and appeared in sullen state. The money was counted out to her, and the poet then stated that, in agreement with her notice, they were about departing.

'Going, sir!' said Mrs Hoordlings; 'I only meant you to go if you could not pay!'

'Probably so,' said the poet; 'but we received formal notice, Mrs Hoordlings, and we intend to abide by it.'

Just at this moment the postman rapped at the street-door, and the girl ran up with a letter for the poet. He opened it, and found enclosed a cheque for £.5 from the 'Sixpenny Magazine.' The poet's wife smiled. Mrs Hoordlings also having caught a glimpse of the cheque, and probably magnified its amount, was the more urgent for them to stop. She was sure she did not wish them to part—not she. Only her master and she were hard-working people, and couldn't afford to lose. She begged their pardon if she had been too quick—that she did. However, the poet was determined to leave; and he did so. His wife and he soon found some neat little lodgings farther towards the country at a cheaper rent. There he struggled on with a good conscience. Three months afterwards he passed Mrs Hoordlings, and her first floor was yet unlet. Moreover, the poet made a song, and the poet's wife sung it:—

'Owls and bats come home to roost,
Larks soar upward to the sky;
Evil deeds are birds of night,
Holy thoughts to Heaven fly.
Pass a wrong, and it will back;
Do the right, and never fear;
For evil deeds there is an eye,
For evil words there is an ear.
Evil deeds, like money bad,
Will come back to the giver;
But innocence, like gold in fire,
Is purified for ever.'

LAND AND FRESH-WATER SHELLS.

ALMOST every one who has resided at any period of his life near the seashore, more especially if it has been at that joyous age when all natural objects possess a charm which too often becomes blunted in after years, knows something of marine shells. Their beautiful forms and colours, or shining pearly whiteness, as we picked them out of the yellow sand, or searched for them among the drifted pebbles and sea-weeds, are frequently among our earliest and most pleasing recollections. But how few people have any idea that there are such things as land and fresh-water shells! With the exception of the common garden snail (*Helix aspersa*), which is familiar to most people, this class of animals is but little known except to the scientific. Yet under almost every stone, and in every pond, ditch, and streamlet, are beautiful little molluscs, with forms as

perfect as any of their marine congeners, silently yet certainly fulfilling their appointed offices in the wondrous scheme of the Creator, by affording food to numerous birds, fishes, and small quadrupeds.

Land shells may be found almost everywhere. Moss, dead leaves, decayed wood, and beneath stones, are their favourite haunts, where they remain during the winter months, and in dry weather, in summer, coming out after rain to feed upon the adjacent herbage. Although very voracious, as their ravages among our fruit, flowers, and vegetables amply testify, yet they can remain for lengthened periods without food, and frequently retain their vitality long after they have been placed as specimens in the cabinet of the conchologist. This is easily explained by the faculty they possess of closing the mouth of the shell by a film of mucus; which in long-protracted drought, and on the approach of winter, is in some species thickened by deposits of shelly matter, until it becomes a calcareous plate, which effectually protects the inmate till the return of more genial weather. This lid, or *epiphragma*, as it is termed, is easily observed at any time during the winter months in the common snail, in which, however, it is only membranous. In a similar manner, the shell is formed by successive deposits of mucous and calcareous secretions, and is, in fact, moulded on its body, as it grows, by the animal, which likewise has the faculty of repairing in the same way all fractures which are not of sufficient extent to derange the natural functions. In the summer months, snails may often be found with the edge of the shell thin and soft. This is the first or mucous deposit, and forms the outer coat, or *epidermis*, of the shell, within which the calcareous matter is subsequently deposited; the beautiful spots and bands on the outer surface being placed between by glands adapted for the purpose.

In this, as in many other departments of nature, different species frequent different soils and geological formations. Thus some are peculiar to heaths and sandy maritime pastures, where they are sometimes so abundant, when roused from their retreats by summer showers, as to have given rise to the notion that they fall from the clouds with the rain; others frequent chalky districts; many are found in woods and damp shady places; and a few in elevated and rocky situations. The British species are upwards of seventy in number, and have been divided into various genera, characterised by the form of the shells and structure of the animals. The most important of these, as containing the greatest number of species, and the largest in size, is that of the snails (*Helix*). This genus contains some of our most beautiful land shells, and comprises every gradation in size, from the handsome *Helix pomatia*, nearly two inches in diameter, to the minute *H. lamellata*, not larger than a mignonette seed. Their colours are often disposed with great elegance in spots, and bands of dark brown or black, upon a light-brown, yellow, or pink ground; and nothing can surpass the delicacy of tinting and pencilling in such species as the banded snail (*Helix pisanæ*). Although rather repulsive from their slimy nature, several of them have been used as food. The edible snail (*Helix pomatia*), in particular, has been employed in this way by the continental nations since the time of the Romans, who fattened them on purpose. At one time it seems to have been even admitted at our own tables, as Martinus Lister, in his 'Historia Animalium Angliæ, Lond. 1678,' mentions the manner of cooking them in his time: 'Coquantur ex aqua fluviali, et, adjectis oleo, sale, et pipere, lautum ferculum præparant.' Ben Jonson also mentions this dish as a delicacy—

— 'Neither have I
Dressed snails or mushrooms curiously before him.'

In Provence, the *Helix aperta*, or tapada snail, a much smaller species, is eaten, and considered the most delicate kind. The common snail 'is sold,' according to Mr Gray, 'in Covent-Garden market, as a cure for diseases

of the chest, boiled in milk; and quantities are collected, and packed in old casks, and sent to the United States of America as delicacies.' The edible snail, if more abundant in this country than it is, might also be made use of in another way, as Dr Turton observes—'After the animal has been extracted, there remains at the bottom of the shell a glairy transparent matter, which affords one of the best and most durable cements in nature, resisting every degree of heat and moisture.'

The animals of this genus afford an acceptable food in severe weather to those delightful songsters of our woods and gardens, the blackbird and song thrush, whose efforts to fracture the protecting shell are sometimes most interesting. One species, the *Helix nemoralis*, or girdled snail, is frequently infested by a parasitic insect, the larva of a small yellowish beetle, the *Drius flavescens* of entomologists; and it is perhaps not generally known that the chief food of the glow-worm (*Lampyris noctiluca*) in the larva state consists of young snails, which it seizes, kills, and finally devours. The empty shells of several species are likewise appropriated by the mason-bees of the genus *Osmia*; and in these rather singular receptacles they build their cells, and store up a supply of food for their progeny. This curious fact seems to have been first recorded by Huber, and has since been frequently observed by our English entomologists.

The twist-shells (*Bulinus*) are another interesting genus, and are remarkable, along with the close-shells (*Clausilia*), for their elegant spiral forms. The latter have also the peculiarity of a reversed aperture, the mouth of the shell opening to the left hand instead of the right—a peculiarity of structure which is also observable in one or two other genera and species. But perhaps the most singular of all are the little chrysalis and whorl-shells (*Pupa* and *Vertigo*), found sticking to the under sides of stones in woods and dry pastures. They are of almost equal width throughout their whole extent, resembling mummies or the transition state in insects, and generally have the inside of the mouth set round with small shining points or teeth, the use of which does not seem satisfactorily ascertained, though it is probable that they serve in some degree to prevent the intrusion of enemies, like the singular elastic valve which closes the mouth of the *Clausilia*, or the winter *epiphragma* of many species.

Fresh-water shells are even more varied and beautiful in their forms than the terrestrial species, which they much resemble in many points of their economy. They are generally distributed over the fresh waters of our island, some species being found in rivers and running streams, others in ditches and stagnant pools, and many in lakes and ponds. They may be divided into univalves and bivalves: the former consisting, like the land shells, of one piece; the latter of two, connected by a hinge. Most of the univalves, although living in a different element, respire free air, like the land shells, and come to the surface occasionally for this purpose. At such times they crawl up the stems and leaves of water plants, or the sides of stones, sometimes coming entirely out of the water. They have also the faculty, in common with the bivalves, of floating with their backs downwards, and with their fleshy foot extended on the surface, which they thus traverse as on a solid plane. The bivalves, and one or two genera of the univalves, respire water by means of gills or branchiæ, and are therefore strictly aquatic.

These shelly denizens of our ponds and ditches are not so numerous in species as those of the land, but generally exceed them in individual numbers. Altogether, there are about fifty-two species indigenous to Britain, of which thirty-five are univalves, and the remaining seventeen bivalves. Among the univalves we may notice the pond snails (*Limæna*), comprising several genera of great elegance, the principal of which are the mud-shells (*Limæna*) and the coil-shells (*Planorbis*). The former may be frequently seen sticking, like small muddy excrescences, on the sides of submerged stones,

or the smooth surface of the mud, where they are easily overlooked by the unpractised eye; but when brought to the surface, and freed from the mossy incrustation with which they are covered, we have elegant, spirally-twisted shells, transparent, and nearly colourless, or tinted with various shades of brown, according to the species or the nature of the soil. The coil-shells are well described by their name. Instead of being twisted in a spiral form, they are evenly coiled in a gradually-increasing circle, like the fossil *Ammonites*. In habits they resemble the *Limnea*, with this exception, that they are seldom found among mud. Then we have the little fresh-water limpets (*Ancylus*), which adhere to the stones in brooks, and sometimes in lakes, where the water is clear. One species adheres firmly to aquatic plants.

Turning to the bivalves, we have the gigantic swan mussel (*Anodon cygneus*), which lives deep in the mud of lakes and ponds, and grows upwards of half a foot in width. This shell occasionally contains pearls, though not so frequently as the fresh-water pearl mussel (*Unio margaritifera*), which, from the nature of its habitat in rocky mountain streams and rivers, is more liable to those incidental injuries and irritations to which the formation of these much-prized productions may generally be traced. The pretty little shells of the genera *Cyclas* and *Pisidium* present a marked contrast to their congeners just mentioned, in their small and frequently diminutive size. They are very compact and neat in form, somewhat resembling miniature cockles, and are found abundantly both in stagnant and running waters, generally lying at the bottom among the mud and sand.

In concluding this hasty sketch of our land and fluviatile shells, we would earnestly recommend all lovers of nature to investigate them for themselves. They are within the reach of every one who has time and inclination for a country walk, and will well repay the trouble of searching for them in their respective haunts, by the gratification and instruction they are so well fitted to afford.

MOIRA HOUSE AT TWO EPOCHS.

CHANGE and decay are such unfailing attendants on humanity, that their ravages do not surprise, however they may afflict us; so that, after a long separation from the friends of our early years, we are quite prepared, on meeting them again, to find that the freshness and buoyancy of youth have been succeeded by the infirmities of age. But when decay affixes its stamp prematurely on objects of a more enduring character, a feeling of disappointment arises within us, and we are almost surprised to find how deeply we may be moved by the crumbling of stone, or the dilapidation of some well-remembered edifice.

In no other place, perhaps, are such emotions more frequently awakened than in Dublin, where the fine buildings which, about fifty years ago, were the abode of rank and wealth, are now neglected and decayed. One of her former palaces has in recent times been the receptacle of misery, singular both in its character and its amount; and the contrast between its earlier and its later condition has fixed itself too vividly in my memory ever to be forgotten.

Upwards of sixty years ago, I was, during my early youth, a frequent guest at Moira House, a princely dwelling, situated on Usher's Island, which at that time was a more fashionable quarter of Dublin than it is in the present day. It was then inhabited by the Earl and Countess of Moira and their family. Lady Moira (daughter of the celebrated Countess of Huntingdon) was a woman of superior intellect and acquirements, so that she delighted to gather around her all who had any pretension to literary or professional celebrity. The family party was a large and distinguished one, comprising the late Marquis of Hastings (then General Lord Rawdon), Lord and Lady Granard, and Lord and Lady Mount-

cashel; in addition to whom there were two younger sons and one unmarried daughter, all in the prime of life. My companions were among the grandsons of the earl; and while we were busy at one end of the saloon playing at a round game, or devising some boyish frolic, the elder ones of the party were pursuing, in the same apartment, occupations or amusements more suitable to their years. But the aged countess was never too much engaged with her brilliant circle to omit attending to the enjoyment of her younger guests, in whose recreations she always took a kind and lively interest.

A few years later I joined my regiment, and left Ireland, to which my visits were necessarily brief during the ensuing half century, which was a stirring and busy period of my life—part of it being devoted to the service of my country in the four quarters of the globe.

About ten or twelve years ago, I was passing a few months in Dublin, and being desirous to revisit the scenes of my early and happy days, I bent my course to Moira House, when, to my astonishment, I found it the receptacle of all the most miserable beggars in Dublin, who were congregated there to the amount of 2400 men, women, and children, who were daily fed and employed in that house. The reader may judge of my feelings on entering the drawing-room, which I remembered as having been once filled with all that was noble and distinguished in the land, now crammed with poor ragged women, who were employed in spinning and other occupations. If this apartment had been the scene of healthy, cheerful industry, the change would have been less painful to me; but the squalid poverty of its crowded inmates, and their dispirited looks, made the scene a lamentable one indeed. The atmosphere was stifling; and among the compressed ranks of spinners there was perfect stillness, interrupted only by the dull, ceaseless murmur of the spinning-wheels. This unbroken silence among a mass of Irishwomen was so remarkable, that we were almost startled at the sound of a voice, which began in low sweet tones to sing one of the most mournful of our national melodies. We gave a glance towards the quarter from whence the sound proceeded, and saw, in a corner of the apartment, a young, sad-looking woman, wrapped up in a gray cloak, whose hood partially concealed her features. On leaving the room, we passed close to her side, but she did not even raise her head to look at the strangers. Her song was the song of despair; and it was only too well suited to a position, than which none can be conceived more degrading to humanity—where our fellow-beings were driven in to share the offals of the rich man's table, and then sent abroad at the approach of night to seek a wretched shelter during the hours of darkness.*

I went to the great dining-parlour, which I found occupied by a school of 200 boys, under the National Board, but where I grieved to find their regulations not attended to. On inquiring whether the boys were in the habit of reading the Scripture Extracts provided by the Board, the volume was slowly and reluctantly taken down out of a bookcase, when it became evident, from its state of perfect cleanliness, that no enemy except dust had hitherto invaded its peaceful privacy. We next visited the room which, in former days, had been appropriated to the housekeeper's use—a well-remembered place, where my young companions and I had often disturbed the ancient dame by our mischievous pranks. It was now converted into an Infant School, whose pupils seemed as unruly as they were ragged; for they were scattered in groups around the room, while their teacher, an uncouth-looking young woman, flourished unceasingly a stout wand (her badge of office) over the infants' heads, with little effect apparently besides that of eliciting a few lusty roars from her pupils. For aught we could see, the whole mystery of education was comprised in this wholesome exercise of authority; for on inquiring whether they were not supplied with pictures and large-lettered sentences, such as are used in other Infant Schools, we were coldly answered in the negative. We pursued

* We were informed that they received a penny each to pay for their night's lodging.

our way to the kitchen, where we were shown huge boilers in which potatoes and meal were being prepared for the mid-day repast. These messes were made more savoury by the addition of bones, which had been received from the wealthier parts of the city; and it was a humiliating spectacle to see men and women dragging along small covered dog-carts, filled with bones and scraps which had been given them out of the areas of their richer brethren. Such was the food apportioned to the miserable thousands assembled daily within the walls of Moira House, or, as it was then called, the Mendicity House.

A few minutes after having quitted its precincts, we found ourselves in Grafton Street, pressed by a throng of the gayest equipages in Dublin, many of them crowding around shops whose windows displayed every variety of brilliant texture or of costly jewellery. At any other time we might have enjoyed the life and animation of the scene, but at that moment it presented so painful a contrast to the place we had just left, that we hastened our steps, and were not sorry to find ourselves in a more sober and tranquil part of the city.

Since that day I have not felt a wish to revisit Moira House.

THE NIGHT SIDE OF NATURE.

SECOND AND CONCLUDING ARTICLE.

THE subjects in the former paper are those in which the living are concerned. We now come to those which regard the dead. Here incredulity is disposed to make its most determined stand. Very well; but our object is to display the kind of matter this book is composed of. Mrs Crowe remarks with justice, that our efforts to extinguish the almost instinctive belief in the young are seldom very effectual; and she adds, 'Suppose the subject were duly investigated, and it were ascertained that the views I and many others are disposed to entertain with regard to it are correct; and suppose, then, children were calmly told that it is not impossible but that on some occasion they may see a departed friend again; that the laws of nature, established by an All-wise Providence, admit of the dead sometimes revisiting the earth, doubtless for the benevolent purpose of keeping alive in us our faith in a future state; that death is merely a transition to another life, which it depends on ourselves to make happy or otherwise; and that whilst those spirits which appear bright and blessed, may well be objects of our envy, the others should excite only our intense compassion'—in that case terror might be more thoroughly banished.

The examples adduced by Mrs Crowe are so numerous, as to justify her in saying that the day of these things has never been, and is not now truly past. The number might become tedious, were they not classed in groups according to certain leading features, and mixed up with speculations, or attempts to rationalise the facts under natural laws—all of which are ingenious, while some, with any matter less opposed to common tendencies of belief, could not fail to be successful. The following story is described by Mrs Crowe as well authenticated:—

'In the year 1783, some cadets were ordered to proceed from Madras to join their regiments up the country. A considerable part of the journey was to be made in a barge, and they were under the conduct of a senior officer, Major R—. In order to relieve the monotony of the voyage, this gentleman proposed one day that they should make a shooting excursion inland, and walk round to meet the boat at a point agreed on, which, owing to the windings of the river, it would not reach till evening. They accordingly took their guns, and as they had to cross a swamp, Major R—, who was well acquainted with the country, put on a heavy pair of top-boots, which, together with an odd limp he had in his gait, rendered him distinguishable from the rest of

the party at a considerable distance. When they reached the jungle, they found there was a wide ditch to leap, which all succeeded in doing except the major, who, being less young and active, jumped short of the requisite distance; and although he scrambled up unhurt, he found his gun so crammed full of wet sand, that it would be useless till thoroughly cleaned. He therefore bade them walk on, saying he would follow; and taking off his hat, he sat down in the shade, where they left him. When they had been beating about for game some time, they began to wonder the major did not come on, and they shouted to let him know whereabouts they were; but there was no answer; and hour after hour passed without his appearance, till at length they began to feel somewhat uneasy. Thus the day wore away, and they found themselves approaching the rendezvous: the boat was in sight, and they were walking down to it, wondering how their friend could have missed them, when suddenly, to their great joy, they saw him before them making towards the barge. He was without his hat or gun, limping hastily along, in his top-boots, and did not appear to observe them. They shouted after him, but as he did not look round, they began to run, in order to overtake him; and indeed fast as he went, they did gain considerably upon him. Still he reached the boat first, crossing the plank which the boatmen had placed ready for the gentlemen they saw approaching. He ran down the companion stairs, and they after him; but inexpressible was their surprise when they could not find him below. They ascended again, and inquired of the boatmen what had become of him; but they declared he had not come on board, and that nobody had crossed the plank till the young men themselves had done so. The body of Major R— was found by them in a neighbouring well, into which he was supposed to have accidentally fallen.

In a case like this, the common theory of spectral illusion must be allowed to have little force, since five persons saw the object at once.

There is a large class of cases where a trouble about some secular matter seems to be the cause of the return to common haunts; often it is trouble about what appears comparatively a trifle—as the return of a borrowed article of furniture, or the imparting of information about something that has been lost. As formerly mentioned, when a natural law is supposed, the triviality of the object is nothing in point. A more perplexing circumstance is, the communication being sometimes made, not to the person chiefly interested in the matter, but to some other person. This, however, our author overcomes by the suggestion, that susceptibility in the seer is also concerned. The chief person may be too much wrapped up in the sensuous envelope to be sensible of such appearances, and it may therefore be necessary to try another. She joins the German philosophers in their ideas about the destinies of spirits after they leave the body; some being too much clogged with the impressions and tendencies of the material world, to be able to pass at once forward into another sphere, though such may be by and by attained. In this intermediate stage they cling to the earth, hovering about the scenes where they have passed their mortal days: in some instances, from particular causes—as from great guilt or great suffering—this haunting of earthly localities lasts a long time, even centuries. This brings us to the section on haunted houses.

We might suppose that this was a thing known only to our ancestors. It appears, however, that there are still many haunted houses in this civilised land. There is one at Willington, between Newcastle and North Shields, belonging to a very respectable member of the Society of Friends, which has attracted much local attention. So lately as 1840, a gentleman named Drury, a determined sceptic, undertook to pass a night in this house with a friend; and, very unexpectedly to himself, saw 'the figure of a female attired in grayish garments, with the head inclining downwards, and one hand pressed upon the chest as in pain.' He rushed upon it, but fell

in a swoon, from which he did not recover for three hours.

Amongst the various stories related under this head, a clear superiority in all respects is to be awarded to one reported to our author by a member of a distinguished English family, who was herself concerned in the series of transactions. The narration is as follows:—

‘Sir James, my mother, with myself and my brother Charles, went abroad towards the end of the year 1786. After trying several different places, we determined to settle at Lille, where we found the masters particularly good, and where we had also letters of introduction to several of the best French families. There Sir James left us; and after passing a few days in an uncomfortable lodging, we engaged a nice large family-house, which we liked much, and which we obtained at a very low rent, even for that part of the world.

‘About three weeks after we were established in our new residence, I walked one day with my mother to the banker’s, for the purpose of delivering our letter of credit from Sir Robert Herries, and drawing some money, which being paid in heavy five-franc pieces, we found we could not carry, and therefore requested the banker to send, saying, “We live in the Place Du Lion D’or.” Whereupon he looked surprised, and observed that he knew of no house there fit for us, “Except, indeed,” he added, “the one that has been long uninhabited, on account of the *revenant* that walks about it.” He said this quite seriously, and in a natural tone of voice; in spite of which we laughed, and were quite entertained at the idea of a ghost; but at the same time we begged him not to mention the thing to our servants, lest they should take any fancies into their heads; and my mother and I resolved to say nothing about the matter to any one. “I suppose it is the ghost,” said my mother laughing, “that wakes us so often by walking over our heads.” We had, in fact, been awakened several nights by a heavy foot, which we supposed to be that of one of the men-servants, of whom we had three English and four French; of women servants, we had five English, and all the rest were French. The English ones, men and women, every one of them, returned ultimately to England with us.

‘A night or two afterwards, being again awakened by the step, my mother asked Creswell, “who slept in the room above us?” “No one, my lady,” she replied; “it is a large empty garret.”

‘About a week or ten days after this, Creswell came to my mother one morning, and told her that all the French servants talked of going away, because there was a *revenant* in the house; adding, that there seemed to be a strange story attached to the place, which was said, together with some other property, to have belonged to a young man, whose guardian, who was also his uncle, had treated him cruelly, and confined him in an iron cage; and as he had subsequently disappeared, it was conjectured he had been murdered. This uncle, after inheriting the property, had suddenly quitted the house, and sold it to the father of the man of whom we had hired it. Since that period, though it had been several times let, nobody had ever stayed in it above a week or two; and for a considerable time past it had had no tenant at all.

‘And do you really believe all this nonsense, Creswell?” said my mother.

‘Well, I don’t know, my lady,” answered she; “but there’s the iron cage in the garret over your bedroom, where you may see it if you please.”

‘Of course we rose to go; and as just at that moment an old officer, with his Croix de St Louis, called on us, we invited him to accompany us, and we ascended together. We found, as Creswell had said, a large empty garret, with bare brick walls, and in the further corner of it stood an iron cage, such as wild beasts are kept in, only higher: it was about four feet square, and eight in height, and there was an iron ring

in the wall at the back, to which was attached an old rusty chain, with a collar fixed to the end of it. I confess it made my blood creep when I thought of the possibility of any human being having inhabited it! And our old friend expressed as much horror as ourselves, assuring us that it must certainly have been constructed for some such dreadful purpose. As, however, we were no believers in ghosts, we all agreed that the noises must proceed from somebody who had an interest in keeping the house empty; and since it was very disagreeable to imagine that there were secret means of entering it by night, we resolved, as soon as possible, to look out for another residence, and in the meantime to say nothing about the matter to anybody. About ten days after this determination, my mother, observing one morning that Creswell, when she came to dress her, looked exceedingly pale and ill, inquired if anything was the matter with her?

‘Indeed, my lady,” answered she, “we have been frightened to death; and neither I nor Mrs Marsh can sleep again in the room we are now in.”

‘Well,” returned my mother, “you shall both come and sleep in the little spare room next us. But what has alarmed you?”

‘Some one, my lady, went through our room in the night: we both saw the figure, but we covered our heads with the bedclothes, and lay in a dreadful fright till morning.”

‘On hearing this, I could not help laughing, upon which Creswell burst into tears; and seeing how nervous she was, we comforted her by saying we had heard of a good house, and that we should very soon abandon our present habitation.

‘A few nights afterwards, my mother requested me and Charles to go to her bedroom and fetch her frame, that she might prepare her work for the next day. It was after supper; and we were ascending the stairs by the light of a lamp which was always kept burning, when we saw going up before us a tall, thin figure, with hair flowing down his back, and wearing a loose powdering-gown. We both at once concluded it was my sister Hannah, and called out, “It won’t do, Hannah! You cannot frighten us!”—upon which the figure turned into a recess in the wall; but as there was nobody there when we passed, we concluded that Hannah had contrived somehow or other to slip away and make her escape by the back-stairs. On telling this to my mother, however, she said, “It is very odd! for Hannah went to bed with a headache before you came in from your walk;” and sure enough, on going to her room, there we found her fast asleep; and Alice, who was at work there, assured us that she had been so for more than an hour. On mentioning this circumstance to Creswell, she turned quite pale, and exclaimed that that was precisely the figure she and Marsh had seen in their bedroom.

‘About this time my brother Harry came to spend a few days with us, and we gave him a room up another pair of stairs, at the opposite end of the house. A morning or two after his arrival, when he came down to breakfast, he asked my mother angrily, whether she thought he went to bed drunk, and could not put out his own candle, that she sent those French rascals to watch him. My mother assured him that she had never thought of doing such a thing; but he persisted in the accusation, adding, “Last night I jumped up and opened the door, and by the light of the moon, through the skylight, I saw the fellow in his loose gown at the bottom of the stairs. If I had not been in my shirt, I would have gone after him, and made him remember coming to watch me.”

‘We were now preparing to quit the house, having secured another, belonging to a gentleman who was going to spend some time in Italy; but a few days before our removal, it happened that a Mr and Mrs Atkins, some English friends of ours, called, to whom we mentioned these strange circumstances, observing how extremely unpleasant it was to live in a house that

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somebody found means of getting into, though how they contrived it we could not discover, nor what their motive could be, except it was to frighten us; observing, that nobody could sleep in the room Marsh and Creswell had been obliged to give up. Upon this Mrs Atkyns laughed heartily, and said that she should like, of all things, to sleep there, if my mother would allow her; adding, that, with her little terrier, she should not be afraid of any ghost that ever appeared. As my mother had of course no objection to this fancy of hers, she requested Mr Atkyns to ride home with the groom, in order that the latter might bring her night-things before the gates of the town were shut, as they were then residing a little way in the country. Mr Atkyns smiled, and said she was very bold; but he made no difficulties, and sent the things, and his wife retired with her dog to her room when we retired to ours, apparently without the least apprehension.

When she came down in the morning, we were immediately struck at seeing her look very ill; and on inquiring if she too had been frightened, she said she had been awakened in the night by something moving in her room, and that, by the light of the night-lamp, she saw most distinctly a figure; and that the dog, which was very spirited, and flew at everything, never stirred, although she had endeavoured to make him. We saw clearly that she had been very much alarmed; and when Mr Atkyns came, and endeavoured to dissipate the feeling, by persuading her that she might have dreamt it, she got quite angry. We could not help thinking that she had actually seen something; and my mother said, after she was gone, that though she could not bring herself to believe it was really a ghost, still she earnestly hoped that she might get out of the house without seeing this figure, which frightened people so much.

We were now within three days of the one fixed for our removal; I had been taking a long ride, and being tired, had fallen asleep the moment I lay down; but in the middle of the night I was suddenly awakened—I cannot tell by what; for the step over our heads we had become so used to, that it no longer disturbed us. Well, I awoke. I had been lying with my face towards my mother, who was asleep beside me; and, as one usually does on awaking, I turned to the other side, where, the weather being warm, the curtain of the bed was undrawn, as it was also at the foot, and I saw, standing by a chest of drawers, which were betwixt me and the window, a thin, tall figure, in a loose powdering-gown, one arm resting on the drawers, and the face turned towards me. I saw it quite distinctly by the night-light, which burnt clearly: it was a long, thin, pale, young face, with, oh, such a melancholy expression as can never be effaced from my memory! I was certainly very much frightened; but my great horror was, lest my mother should awake and see the figure. I turned my head gently towards her, and heard her breathing high in a sound sleep. Just then the clock on the stairs struck four. I daresay it was nearly an hour before I ventured to look again; and when I did take courage to turn my eyes towards the drawers, there was nothing, yet I had not heard the slightest sound, though I had been listening with the greatest intensity.

As you may suppose, I never closed my eyes again; and glad I was when Creswell knocked at the door, as she did every morning, for we always locked it, and it was my business to get out of bed and let her in. But on this occasion, instead of doing so, I called out, "Come in; the door is not fastened," upon which she answered that it was, and I was obliged to get out of bed and admit her as usual.

When I told my mother what had happened, she was very grateful to me for not waking her, and commended me much for my resolution; but as she was always my first object, that was not to be wondered at. She, however, resolved not to risk another night in the house; and we got out of it that very day, after insti-

tuting, with the aid of the servants, a thorough search, with a view to ascertain if there was any possible means of getting into the rooms except by the usual modes of ingress; but our search was vain: none could be discovered.

Mrs Crowe adds the remark—"Considering the number of people that were in the house, the fearlessness of the family, and their disinclination to believe in what is called the *supernatural*, together with the great interest the owner of this large and handsome residence must have had in discovering the trick, if there had been one, I think it is difficult to find any other explanation of this strange story, than that the sad and disappointed spirit of this poor, injured, and probably murdered boy, had never been disengaged from its earthly relations, to which regret for its frustrated hopes and violated rights still held it attached."

The Germans have, like us, the mischievous racketing spirit, which they call *Poltergeist*. Its peculiarity is, to make noises about the house, to cause crockery to fall from shelves and break, to throw stones through rooms, but only to fall at people's feet, and so forth. England furnished a noted case in the Stockwell ghost in the year 1772. Lately, the newspapers announced one in a house at Bayswater, near London. The best detailed, and, shall we say, best authenticated case on record, appears to be one which occurred at the castle of Prince Hohenloe, in Silesia, in 1806, when two gentlemen named Hahn and Kern were confined there. Here noises amounting to detonations were heard from neighbouring apartments; pieces of plaster were thrown at the two gentlemen; all the loose articles in the apartment flew wildly about; and lights darted during the night from every corner. M. Kern, looking in a mirror, saw a white female figure, with the face of an old person, bearing an aspect, not gloomy or morose, but rather of indifference. Hahn, who became a councillor, testified to these inexplicable events so lately as 1828. A curious appearance of verification is given to such things, when we learn that, in 1835, a case came before the sheriff of Edinburghshire, in which a gentleman who had leased a house at Trinity was prosecuted for damages he had done to it, by shooting pistols and knocking down pieces of wall, in order to detect the source of such a series of annoyances. The landlord considered the tenant's daughter, a sickly girl, who usually kept her bed, as the cause of the mischief; but all efforts at detection proved vain; and the girl did not long survive, 'hastened out of the world,' it is said, 'by the severe measures used while she was under suspicion.'

But we must now bring this subject to a close. We regret that want of space has forbidden us to enter so largely into the speculative part of the book as we could have wished. It contains many ingenious reasonings, which, if we could only admit the premises on which they proceed, seem as if they would lead us to some interesting knowledge respecting the ultimate destiny of man. The great question is as to these premises. 'Give us facts,' cry the Baconians; 'and when we have enough, we shall proceed to generalise.' 'Well, here are facts.' 'Oh, but these are false facts, for they do not accord with anything we have already ascertained.' It being undoubted that things may be thought to be facts which are none, most persons rest here satisfied. Others, who, like Mrs Crowe, bring forward new doctrines, resting on what they believe to be facts, complain, with some show of truth, that the modern philosophy lands them in a vicious circle, which puts a stop to all progress. It does not quite do this; but it certainly affords encouragement only to sciences strictly experimental, where probation is readily attainable. Where that is not the case, progress is undoubtedly much obstructed. Hence that ultra-physical character which our age has assumed, while all the speculative sciences are in a manner starved and dwarfed. It would be difficult to estimate in how great a degree this tells upon the moral tendencies of our time—how unspiritual

it makes us all. Studies like those in the 'Night Side of Nature' are in these circumstances welcome, if it were only as a means of making head against the materialism to which we are tending.

THE BASS ROCK.

THE Firth of Forth, as well as the Firth of Clyde, is signalled by an extraordinary rock, rising abruptly from the water's edge to a height of several hundred feet. Both have the appearance of a natural fortress guarding the gorge of the river, and both being unfit for the abiding-place of human beings, are tenanted by myriads of water-fowl, belonging in a special manner neither to the land nor the sea. The two, however, are different in their history and their fate—Ailsa being a mere adjunct of the grandly-beautiful picture presented by the Clyde, while the Bass is linked with the annals of Scotland, as well as associated with the dreams of her poets, and has now the honour to be the theme of a work produced by the united labours of five of her literati.*

In the preface to the work, Mr Mc'Crie, who acts as the editor, rallies good-naturedly himself and his colleagues on the limited dimensions of the ground selected for their operations; but we all know how much may be said—and well said too—about a very small matter. A tolerable enough little work has been produced by a French author descriptive of a tour round his room; and why should we not have this goodly volume, the achievement of five united intellects, touching a rock in the sea, fully a mile in circumference, and four hundred and twenty feet high?

The arrangement of the volume, however, is clearly wrong. It begins with the end of the sixth century of the vulgar era, then goes back to the pre-Adamite ages to tell in what manner the Bass came to be, then flies madly down to the epoch of the Solemn League and Covenant, then dallies with the solan geese on the summit, and finally tries to put nature out of countenance by cataloguing her parsimonious gifts in the way of lichens and weeds. In this paper we shall take the liberty of correcting so ill-considered a sequence of subjects, and begin with Mr Hugh Miller's account of the part played by the Bass in that grand spectacle—the creation of the present world.

'The ponderous column of the Bass,' says he, 'to sum up my theory in a few words, is composed, as has been shown, of one of the harder and more solid of the igneous rocks. Rising near the centre of the disturbed district in which it occurs, it indicates, I am inclined to hold, the place of a great crater, at one time filled to the top with molten matter, which, when the fires beneath burnt low, gradually and slowly consolidated into crystalline as it cooled, until it became the unyielding rock which we now find it. The tuffaceous matrix in which it had been moulded, exposed to the denuding agencies, wore piecemeal away; much even of the upper portion of the column itself may have disappeared; and what remains, rising from the level of the sea-bottom below to the height of six hundred feet, may be regarded as the capital-divested top of some pillar of the desert, that, buried by the drifting sand, exhibits but a comparatively small portion of its entire length over the surface, but descends deep into the interior, communicating with the very basement of the edifice to which it belongs.'

Wildly sweeps the great gulf stream round this remarkable eminence, and the ceaseless roll of the waves of the Atlantic, till, in the course of ages, the appointed rise or submergence of the neighbouring land is complete, and the Bass stands erect in the sea, a monument of an earlier world. What is its aspect now? 'The sun,' says

our author, standing on the ruins of Tantallon Castle, 'glanced bright on the deep green of the sea immediately beneath; and the reflection went dancing in the calm, in wavelets of light, athwart the shaded faces of the precipices; while a short mile beyond, the noble Bass loomed tall in the offing, half in light, half in shadow; and, dimly discerned through the slowly dissipating haze, in the background rose the rampart-like crags of the Isle of May. Nor was the framing of the picture, as surveyed through one of the shattered openings of the edifice, without its share of picturesque beauty; it consisted of fantastically-piled stone, moulded of old by the chisel, and now partially o'ershadowed by tufts of withered grass and half-faded wallflower.'

The Bass, it will be felt, was just the place for a hermit; and accordingly the first notice we have of the rock in modern times is its becoming the retirement of St Baldred, a Culdee presbyter, as Mr Mc'Crie opines, and no bishop, as others will have it. Thence the holy man sallied forth occasionally to teach the rude natives on the mainland the doctrines of Christianity; for 'in those days,' says Bede, 'people never came into a church but only for hearing the word and prayer. All the care of these doctors was to serve God, not the world—to feed souls, not their own bodies. Wherefore a religious habit was then much revered; and if any priest entered a village, incontinently all the people would assemble, being desirous to hear the word of life; for the priests did not go into villages upon any other occasion, except to preach, or visit the sick, or, in a word—to feed souls.' The earliest proprietors were the ancient family of the Lauders, a charter in favour of one of them dating as far back as 1316. In 1405, the Bass is first heard of as a 'strength,' or fortified place, when it afforded a temporary retreat to James, the son of Robert III., before embarking on that expedition which cost him nineteen years' captivity in England. The first prisoner received by the Bass was Walter Stewart, eldest son of Murdo, Duke of Albany, who was confined in its castle in 1424, while his father was sent to Caerlaverock Castle, and his mother to Tantallon. 'A lively fancy might draw an affecting picture of the old duchess, as she gazed from the opposite towers of Tantallon on the ocean prison that held her wayward son, and describe her feelings as she saw him conveyed away to suffer an ignominious death. But our Scottish ladies of that period were made of sterner stuff than we are apt to imagine. "There is a report current," says Buchanan, "although I do not find it mentioned by any historian, that the king sent the heads of her father, husband, and children to Isabella, on purpose to try whether so violent a woman, in a paroxysm of grief, as sometimes happens, might not betray the secrets of her soul; but she, though affected at the unexpected sight, used no intemperate expressions." I have an old manuscript, which records this piece of savage brutality, and adds that the old lady "said nothing, but that they worthilie died, gif that which was laid against them were trew!"'

The Bass remained a strength during the sixteenth century, and was visited in 1581 by James VI.; but here we must give a strange, wild theory of Hugh Miller, by way of an introduction to the sequel of its history. 'In passing the ancient castle of Dirlerton, which, like the castles of Dunbar, Edinburgh, Stirling, and Dumbarton, owed its degree of impregnability as a stronghold mainly to its abrupt trap-rock, and which stood siege against the English in the days of Edward I., it occurred to me as not a little curious, that the early geological history of a district should so often seem typical of its subsequent civil history. If a country's geological history was very disturbed—if the trap-rocks broke out from below, and tilted up its strata in a thousand abrupt angles, steep precipices, and yawning chasms—the chance is as ten to one that there succeeded, when man came upon the scene, a history scarce less disturbed of fierce wars, protracted sieges, and desperate battles. The stormy morning,

* The Bass Rock: its Civil and Ecclesiastical History, by the Rev. James Mc'Crie; Geology, by Hugh Miller; Martyrology, by the Rev. James Anderson; Zoology, by Professor Fleming of the New College, Edinburgh; and Botany, by Professor Balfour of the University of Edinburgh. Edinburgh: Kennedy. 1846.

during which merely the angry elements contend, is succeeded in almost every instance by a stormy day, maddened by the turmoil of human passion. A moment's farther cogitation, while it greatly dissipated the mystery, served to show through what immense periods mere physical causes may continue to operate with moral effect; and how, in the purposes of Him who saw the end from the beginning, a scene of fiery confusion—of roaring waves and heaving earthquakes—of ascending hills and deepening valleys—may have been closely associated with the right development and ultimate dignity and happiness of the yet unborn moral agent of creation—responsible man. It is amid these centres of geologic disturbance—the natural strongholds of the earth—that the true battles of the race—the battles of civilisation and civil liberty—have been successfully maintained by handfuls of hardy men against the despot-led myriads of the plains. The reader, in glancing over a map of Europe and the countries adjacent, on which the mountain-groups are marked, will at once perceive that Greece and the Holy Land, Scotland and the Swiss cantons, formed centres of great Plutonic disturbance of this character. They had each their geologic tremors and perturbations—their protracted periods of eruption and earthquake—long ere their analogous civil history, with its ages of convulsion and revolution, in which man was the agent, had yet commenced its course. And, indirectly at least, the disturbed civil history was, in each instance, a consequence of the disturbed geologic one. What does our author make of the struggles of the Dutch and Flemings on land scarcely raised out of the sea? The whole matter comes to this, that trap-rocks, surviving denudation, and standing up as abrupt eminences, afford a place of defence to a handful of people against aggressive neighbours. Mr Miller's besetting fault is to make too much of simple ideas.

The Bass surrendered to Cromwell in 1651, and then changed hands more than once, till it was bought twenty years afterwards by government from Sir Andrew Ramsay, provost of Edinburgh, for £4000; 'and a dear bargain it was,' as Kirkton justly observes. This bargain was effected by Lauderdale, who so managed, that the command and profits of the rock, amounting to more than £100 sterling, were bestowed upon himself, together with the title of 'Captain of the Bass.' 'But,' adds Kirkton, 'the use the king made of it was, to make it a prison for the Presbyterian ministers; and some of them thought, when they died in the prison (as Mr John Blackadder did), they glorified God in the islands. But it became a rule of practice among that sort of people, whenever any of them was called before the council, that either they behaved to satisfy the bishop, which never one of them did, or else goe to the Bass; so all of them refused to appear; and our governors expected no more respect or obedience to their summons.'

Forty of these godly men were confined in the Bass during periods varying from a few months to upwards of six years; and by far the greater part of the volume is occupied with their histories, generally obscure, and rarely interesting in the details. 'A slight survey,' says Mr McCrie, 'of the ruins of the fortress, as they now stand in naked desolation, is sufficient to corroborate the testimonies of the prisoners, and to show that they had little reason to congratulate themselves on the selection of their marine prison-house. Placed near the base of the overhanging precipice, it must have formed a sort of tank or reservoir for the perpetual drippings from above, while it was washed by the spray from the ocean below, and entitled by exposure to the full benefit of the eastern blasts. What is still pointed out by some as "Blackadder's cell," is a dormitory about seven feet by eight, situated on the ramparts, with a small window facing the south. If so, he was better appointed than his brethren in the inner prison, the remains of which, though unroofed and unfloored, may be still traced. On a late visit to the ruins, I was struck by observing that

in the western gable of this room is one small window which had served for light, but which is placed at such a height above the floor, that the prisoners could see neither earth nor sky from it; while in the eastern gable there is another window placed at a lower elevation, but so contrived, that it had looked only into a narrow passage, formed by a wall built up against it, and enlightened by a higher aperture in that wall. By this piece of ingenious cruelty, the poor prisoners within would be furnished with a dim and borrowed light, and at the same time prevented from beguiling their captivity by gazing "on mountain, tower, or town," or even on that heaven to which all their hopes were turned, and the straggling beams of which were so scantily afforded them. At the same time the sentries or keepers might at any time, by creeping along this passage, manage, through the inner grating, to observe the movements, and hear the conversations, of their prisoners. There can be no question regarding "the lowest cell in the dungeon," to which Thomas Hog of Kiltarn was consigned, through the tender mercies of Archbishop Sharp. An arched staircase, part of which still remains, leads down under ground from the east end of the castle, to what was anciently called the Bastion, on arriving at which the visitor finds himself in a hideous cavern, arched overhead, dank and dripping, with an opening towards the sea, which dashes within a few feet below. It was in this "horrible pit," then—obviously the "dungeon-keep" of the old castle in the days of its glory—that the good man was deposited; and no wonder that, when his enfeebled frame was dragged down that subterranean passage, and stretched in this dismal den, he should have concluded that his enemies had done their worst—had reached the end of their chain—and that the deepening darkness of the night betokened the near approach of the dawn. This passage is well coloured; but the impression laid by the plainer and more prosaic narrative of Mr Anderson is not quite so painful. Indeed in one instance, an air approaching to the ridiculous is thrown over the complaints of the prisoners, by their including the grievance of being obliged to drink the governor's twopenny ale, which was in reality worth no more than a halfpenny! Their brethren of the present day would have liked the ale the better in proportion to its scarcity of malt. In the case of a fine, high-hearted minister, Thomas Hog, the hardships of the rock appear to have acted with medicinal virtue. His rule was the self-denunciation of Scripture—'Wo unto me if I preach not the gospel!' And because he would come under no promise to refrain from what he conceived to be a sacred duty, he was sent to the Bass. When the act of council was communicated to the good man, he raised himself up with some difficulty in his bed to read it; and on learning its import, feeling that to subject him to the hardships of such a confinement, in his present state of health, was almost equivalent to signing his death-warrant, he said it was as severe as if Satan himself had penned it. In execution of the sentence, he was carried down to a low filthy dungeon; and to all appearance his speedy death was inevitable. But when he found no mercy at the hands of man, he looked by faith and prayer to Him "who hears the groaning of the prisoner;" and to the wonder of all, he in a short time completely recovered. Hog never afterwards showed any resentment at Sharp for this savage treatment, but when speaking of him, used to say merrily, "Commend him to me for a good physician!"

The zoological department of the work is of course chiefly devoted to the solan goose, which has other breeding places as well as our own coasts—namely, the most westerly of the Faroe group, some rocky islands in the bay of St Lawrence, and the coast of Labrador. Boece ridicules the theory of the birth of these birds current in his time, that they grew upon trees like apples, and supplies its place with another of his own, that they were produced by the corruption of the fruit or branch. 'Furthermore, because the rude and igno-

rant people saw oftentimes the fruits that fell from trées, which stood neuer in the sea, conuerted within short time into géese, they beléued that these géese grew vpon trées, hanging by their nebs, as apples and other fruit doo by their stalks, but their opinion is vttierlie to be reiected. For so soone as these apples or fruit fall from the trée into the sea, they grow first to be worm-eaten, and in processe of time to be conuerted into géese.' All this the intelligent reader will perceiue refers to the absurd but once prevalent notion, that the common barnacle of our coasts possessed the wonderful faculty of changing into a goose. The fruit-like aspect of the shell, its flexible foot-stalk, and the long feathery filaments (*cirri*) of the animal, gave rise, no doubt, to this extravagant hypothesis. The barnacle's habit of attaching itself to pieces of timber, decayed and pierced by marine borers, is that to which Boece alludes in the conclusion of his explanation.

The botanical chapter, although necessarily meagre, has a few readable paragraphs, for which we have no room.

In conclusion, the result of this quintuple alliance, although a little too sectarian to suit our feelings, is, upon the whole, a pleasant and readable book, which we recommend to all who have hitherto looked upon the Bass as a mere rock in the sea—a point of scenic effect in the panorama of the Firth of Forth.

POPULAR EDUCATION.

On the occasion of lately laying the foundation-stone of a training college near Caermarthen, the bishop of the diocese made the following eloquent observations on the necessity for popular education:—'It is mortifying for every one who has a proper feeling for the honour of his country, to consider that the surrounding nations of Europe are in advance of England in the matter of popular education. The necessity and importance of popular education has been practically recognised and acted on by them before it has been acknowledged by us. This is an acknowledgment that no Englishman, who has a proper sense of the honour of his country, can make without a feeling of degradation and shame. It would be well, however, if nothing else was affected but the honour of his country. The very safety of the nation is dependent upon popular education. We may try to mask the fact from ourselves, but it has been found from experience and the common information of intelligent judges—in fact all persons are agreed that the present state of things is full of danger to the community at large. I will not rely on any argument as to the mere consideration of the expediency of educating the children of the poor, but I consider it a solemn duty which we owe to the people of this country, and if that duty remains unperformed, there cannot but be danger which ought not to be overlooked. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact, that every neglect of a plain duty must be attended with danger, and the signs and symptoms of this danger are every day more and more apparent. The statistics of population, education, and crime sufficiently attest it. We have sufficient evidence of an immense population growing up, with no sense of duty, no restraint upon their passions, with their intellectual qualities not cultivated, and with no rational and religious sense of their duty towards each other or their Maker. What, therefore, are we doing? We are collecting the materials for a dreadful explosion which will shake society to its foundations. Those who are living in opulence and ease are not aware of this. They may be forming plans for future enjoyment, and reveling in the prospects of national prosperity; but they ought to know that, while they are planting vineyards on their hills, they are, in fact, standing on the sides of a volcano, which is heaving and trembling, and may at any moment open and let out a flood which will overwhelm all our social and national institutions. The symptoms of the laborious throes of society cannot but be perceptible to every thoughtful observer. Let us look nearer home, and see if the scenes which surround us are of a more encouraging character. I fear that it will be entirely the reverse. In speaking of the condition of our own population, every inquiry leads to this conclusion—that the deficiency of education in Wales is even greater than in the rest of the country. I am afraid our moral condition is just such as we might expect from the deficiency in popular education.

I will not make a catalogue of the vices prevalent in the principality, but I cannot omit noticing one, which is a fruitful parent of all crime, and bears every description of evil in its train. I mean the vice of drunkenness; and it does appear from authentic information, that in this country that vice is rapidly on the increase. It thereby appears that whatever improvement is required elsewhere, it will be doubly necessary here. What is the remedy? What the safeguard from this danger? I will answer, Education—popular education.'

SONNET.

[BY CALDER CAMPBELL.]

It doth surpass belief how some—accounted
Wise in their generation—with strange skill
Prove there's more merit in concealing ill
Than in discovering good. The ape, tree-mounted,
Is an apt teacher of such lore; and still
Seeketh to hide his stolen trash, and fill
His secret stores with plunder. Oh could we
Use our intelligence Truth to discover,
Rather than fashion mantles to fling over
Our errors! 'twere an exercise to be
Rewarded in the future piteously;
And in the present, making nature's lover
Acquainted with such joys as ne'er can rest
In the dark mazes of an artful breast!

LONDON, 1848.

NATURAL USES OF HAIR.

That hair effects an important purpose in the animal economy, we have evidence in its almost universal distribution among the mammiferous class of animals; and if we admit the analogy between the feather and the hair among all warm-blooded animals, additional evidence is obtained in the perfection of its structure, and again in its early appearance in the progress of development of the young. As a bad conductor of heat, it tends to preserve the warmth of the body; and in man it would have that effect upon the head, and serve to equalise the temperature of the brain. It is also a medium of defence against external irritants, as the heat of the sun's rays and the bites of insects, and against injuries inflicted with violence. Of special purposes fulfilled by the hairs, we have instances in the eyebrows and eyelids, which are beautifully adapted for the defence of the organs of vision; in the small hairs which grow in the apertures of the nostrils, and serve as guardians to the delicate membrane of the nose; and in similar hairs in the ear-tubes, which defend those cavities from the intrusion of insects.—*Wilson on the Skin.*

TIMBER MINING IN AMERICA.

On the north side of Maurice Creek, New Jersey, the meadows and cedar swamps, as far up as the fast land, are filled with buried cedars to an unknown depth. In 1814 or 1815, an attempt was made to sink a well curb near Dennis Creek landing; but after encountering much difficulty in cutting through a number of logs, the workmen were at last compelled to give up the attempt, by finding, at the depth of twenty feet, a compact mass of cedar logs. It is a constant business near Dennis Creek to 'mine cedar shingles.' This is done by probing the soft mud of the swamps with poles, for the purpose of discovering buried cedar timber; and when a log is found, the mud is cleared off, the log cut up into proper lengths with a long one-handed saw, and these lengths split up into shingles, and carried out of the swamp ready for sale. This kind of work gives constant employment to a large number of hands. The trees found are from four to five feet in diameter—they lie in every possible position, and some of them seem to have been buried for centuries. Thus stumps of trees which have grown to a greater age, and have been decaying a century, are found standing in the place in which they grew, while the trunks of very aged cedars are lying horizontally under their roots.—*Scientific American.*

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